

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01469 01 OF 02 261957Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08
/094 W

-----034479 262013Z /41

R 261201Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5204
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01469

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PINT
SUBJECT: HELMUT KOHL'S CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR

SUMMARY: OPPOSITION LEADER HELMUT KOHL STRUCK AN OPTI-
MISTIC TONE DURING A CONVERSATION WITH ME TODAY. HE
SAID THAT HE EXPECTED 1978 TO BE A YEAR OF GREAT DIFFI-
CULTIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT. HE PARTICULARLY THOUGHT
THAT TERRORIST INCIDENTS COULD RAPIDLY BRING THE
SECURITY ISSUE TO THE FOREFRONT AGAIN. HE THOUGHT THE
CDU WOULD DO WELL IN THE UPCOMING STATE ELECTIONS, BUT
SPOKE BITTERLY OF HOW STRAUSS' TACTICS WERE MAKING IT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 01469 01 OF 02 261957Z

MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE OPPOSITION TO COME TO POWER.

KOHL SAID THE "INNER EMIGRATION" IN THE GDR WAS
REACHING NEW PROPORTIONS AND REFLECTING A DEEP DISAF-
FECTION TOWARD THE REGIME. HE SAID THE NATIONAL QUES-
TION WOULD NOT GO AWAY EVEN THOUGH EVERYBODY RECOG-
NIZED THAT REUNIFICATION WOULD BE FAR OFF. HE SPOKE

IN DISGUSTED TERMS OF THE ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, SUGGESTING THAT FANFANI'S PERSONAL AMBITIONS WOULD HELP BRING THE COMMUNISTS TO POWER. HE ALSO SPOKE AS IF HE EXPECTED MITTERAND TO WORK WITH GISCARD IN FRANCE. END SUMMARY

FRG DOMESTIC ISSUES

1. KOHL SAID THAT THE COALITION GOVERNMENT WAS IN DIFFICULTY AND THAT HE BELIEVED 1978 WOULD BE A CRITICAL YEAR FOR THE COALITION. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE COALITION WOULD FALL, WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHEN OR HOW. HE INDICATED THAT RECENT POLLS SHOW THE OPPOSITION AGAIN ABOVE 50 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, AND OBSERVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT DOING AS WELL AS A FEW MONTHS AGO.

2. KOHL SAID THAT THERE WERE SIMPLY TOO MANY PROBLEMS BESETTING THE GOVERNMENT. HE CITED THE RECENT SCANDAL IN NORTH RHINE WESTPHALIA, THE BUGGING OF LEBER'S SECRETARY, AND THE PENSION ISSUE. HE SAID FOREIGN SUPPORT (IMPLYING ALSO US SUPPORT) WAS HELPING TO KEEP SCHMIDT IN OFFICE, BUT THAT THIS COULD NOT LAST BECAUSE FOREIGN LEADERS WOULD GET TIRED OF SCHMIDT'S CONSTANT SCOLDINGS.

3. KOHL RESERVED HIS HARSHEST COMMENTS FOR STRAUSS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 01469 01 OF 02 261957Z

HE SAID STRAUSS' TACTICS WERE HELPING THE GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT HE WARNED STRAUSS THAT ANY FURTHER STEPS AGAINST KOHL WOULD COMPEL KOHL TO ATTACK STRAUSS PUBLICLY. HE SAID HE FELT THIS WARNING WOULD BE EFFECTIVE BECAUSE HE DID NOT BELIEVE STRAUSS HAD THE STOMACH FOR THAT KIND OF CONFRONTATION. HOWEVER, IN REMARKING ON ELECTION PROSPECTS (SEE BELOW) HE SAID THAT ONE HAD TO RECOGNIZE THAT STRAUSS MIGHT GO OFF COMPLETELY ON HIS OWN AND MAKE THE OPPOSITION'S TASK MUCH HARDER. HE OBSERVED THAT STRAUSS' PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTY WAS THAT HE HAD TO GO BACK TO BAVARIA BUT HE DID NOT WANT TO DO SO.

4. KOHN SAID HE THOUGHT THE OPPOSITION WOULD DO WELL IN THE UPCOMING STATE ELECTIONS. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD OBTAIN A MAJORITY IN LOWER SAXONY, ADDING THAT HE PRIVATELY HOPED THE MAJORITY WOULD NOT BE TOO BIG. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE CONTENT WITH A SMALL INCREASE IN HAMBURG, AND THOUGHT THE OPPOSITION COULD GO OVER 40 THERE. HE SAID HESSE WOULD BE TOUGH BUT THE OPPOSITION STOOD A CHANCE. HE DID NOT COMMENT ON THE BAVARIAN STATE ELECTION.

5. THE JOKER IN THE DECK, ACCORDING TO KOHL, WAS
TERRORISM. KOHL SAID THIS ISSUE REMAINED BARELY BE-
LOW THE SURFACE ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOT NOW BEING DISCUSSED
AS MUCH AS BEFORE. HE THOUGHT THAT OTHER INCIDENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01469 02 OF 02 261949Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 MCT-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 EB-08
/094 W

-----034262 262013Z /41

R 261201Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5205
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01469

WOULD OCCUR AND THAT SUCH INCIDENTS WOULD LEAD TO A
POPULAR DEMAND FOR FIRMER LEGISLATIVE ACTION. THIS,
HE SAID, WOULD DAMAGE THE GOVERNMENT COALITION. HE
SAID, IN SPEAKING ABOUT THE ELECTION PROSPECTS IN
INDIVIDUAL STATES, THAT A TERRORIST INCIDENT WOULD
ALSO HAVE AN EFFECT ON SUCH ELECTIONS.

THE GDR AND THE MANIFESTO

6. KOHL SAID THE MOST STRIKING THING ABOUT THE GDR,
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 01469 02 OF 02 261949Z

ACCORDING TO INFORMATION HE RECEIVED, WAS THE RISING
TENDENCY TOWARDS INNER EMIGRATION. HE SAID MORE AND
MORE PEOPLE WANTED "DACHAS," LARGELY IN ORDER TO GET
AWAY FROM PARTY AND GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE IN CITY
HOUSING BLOCKS. HE FELT THIS ALIENATION FROM THE RE-
GIME COULD NOT HELP BUT DAMAGE IT.

7. KOHL EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT THE MANIFESTO HAD
BROUGHT THE NATIONAL QUESTION ONCE AGAIN TO THE FORE-
FRONT, AND THAT IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT THIS QUESTION
WOULD NOT GO AWAY IN HISTORICAL TERMS. HE SAID
REUNIFICATION WOULD ALWAYS BE ON PEOPLE'S MINDS, EVEN
IF IT TOOK GENERATIONS TO ACHIEVE AND HAD TO BE ACHIEVED
UNDER SOME NEW POLITICAL STRUCTURE THAN THE NATIONAL
STATE.

ITALY

8. KOHL SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO TELL WHAT WOULD HAP-
PEN IN ITALY. HE SAID THE DC WAS A COALITION OF INDI-
VIDUAL PERSONALITIES DOING WHAT SUITED EACH ONE'S OWN
PERSONALITY. HE THOUGHT FANFANI HOPED TO BE
PRESIDENT AND MIGHT BE INCLINED TO LET THE COMMUNISTS
INTO THE GOVERNMENT TO GAIN THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE
PRESIDENCY.

9. KOHL SAID THE CDU WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO
BREAK TIES WITH THE DC IN CASE OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPA-
TION IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT SUCH A
BREAK WOULD HAVE TO BE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED IF THE CDU
WERE NOT TO SUFFER LOSSES AMONG ITS SUPPORTERS HERE.
KOHL ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE POPE WAS NOT BEING
VERY HELPFUL.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 01469 02 OF 02 261949Z

FRANCE

10. KOHL SAID IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THERE WOULD BE SOME
COLLABORATION BETWEEN GISCARD AND MITTERAND AFTER THE
FRENCH ELECTIONS. HE DID NOT INDICATE ANY PARTICULAR
WAY IN WHICH THAT WOULD AFFECT HIM.

THE PASSING OF LEADERS

11. AT ONE POINT KOHL OBSERVED BRIEFLY, IN SPEAKING OF 1978 AS AN IMPORTANT YEAR, THAT A NUMBER OF LEADERS MIGHT PASS FROM THE WORLD SCENE. HE CITED THE POPE AS ONE. HE ALSO SAID THAT BREZHNEV WOULD PROBABLY LEAVE OFFICE, AND THAT HONECKER WOULD THEREFORE GO AS WELL.
STOESSEL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADORS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN01469
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780039-0573
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780121/aaaaarmh.tel
Line Count: 234
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c24909e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3712629
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HELMUT KOHL'S CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR SUMMARY: OPPOSITION LEADER HELMUT KOHL STRUCK AN OPTIMISTIC TONE DURING A CONVERSATION WITH ME TODA Y.
TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, PINT, US, GE, (KOHL, HELMUT), (STOESSEL, WALTER J JR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c24909e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014